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SUBJECT: UNAMID DEPLOYMENT UPDATE

REF: A) KHARTOUM 1468
B) KHARTOUM 1451

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: In meetings from October 11-15, UNAMID officials expressed concern over slow progress on airport upgrades, UNAMID's lack of air assets, and the weak security posture of many of UNAMID's bases. Chief of Staff Almstrom and J5 Colonel Stafford both stated that their focus of late has been UNAMID's internal security, emergency planning, and the need for better protection of IDPs. Construction on UNAMID's supercamps is proceeding well, and UNOPS will likely take over management for many projects managed by PAE as well as others (such as community policing centers). All UNAMID contacts cited improved cooperation with the GoS on a number of issues, including self-deployment, extended airport hours, and standardized customs clearance procedure. Most UNAMID contacts appeared confident that deployment will reach at least 60% by the end of 2008. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) The following UNAMID officials provided information for this report during meetings with poloff October 11-15:

- Deputy Force Commander General Karenzi
- JSR Chief of Staff Almstrom
- Chief of Plans Colonel Stafford
- Deputy Director of Mission Support Wolfgang Weiszegger

DEPLOYMENT TIMELINE

¶3. (SBU) All UNAMID contacts stated that the goal of reaching 60% deployment for UNAMID by the end of December is an attainable goal. According to J5 Planning Chief Stafford, 60-63% deployment is "almost a certainty." Stafford said that current deployment is at 44%, but that by simply rotating the battalions to full strength, UNAMID will gain another 1300 troops. Weiszegger was more confident than Stafford saying that UNAMID would reach 65% deployment by the end of 2008 "for sure," and will most likely reach 85% deployment by the end of March 2009. Weiszegger stated that UNAMID will receive its 10,000th troop by the end of October, after receiving 1,275 this month in October. Chief of Staff Almstrom said that UNAMID has a "reasonable chance" of reaching sixty percent deployment by the end of 2008. [Note: Less than two months ago, Almstrom used the same phrase to describe UNAMID's chances of reaching 80% deployment. Reftel C.)

¶4. (SBU) DFC Karenzi noted that the current deployment plan (with the goal of reaching 65% deployment by the end of the year) relies on concentrating more troops in fewer bases. UNAMID's current 31 bases will gradually be reduced to 18 bases with at least a half of a battalion at each location. This will provide better protection for UNAMID's troops and reduce logistical challenges. Karenzi was

hopeful that this reduction in bases will not lead to less patrolling and coverage of Darfur, as UNAMID will compensate by conducting more long-range and overnight patrols. Karenzi also noted that UNAMID's deployment estimates for December 2008 and March 2009 depend on the fulfillment of pledges by TCCs.

¶15. (SBU) Weiszegger provided the latest schedule for arriving troops, differing very little from previous schedules provided to poloffs (as in reftel.) The latest estimates for enabling units scheduled to deploy include a 348 person Bangladeshi multi-role logistics unit to Nyala on October 20-21, and an Egyptian unit that could "hopefully" be as large as 590 arriving on October 27-30. (Weiszegger noted, however, that the number could be significantly lower.) A Nepali FPU of over 100 police is scheduled to arrive from October 15-18. Stafford noted that a 330-person Pakistani Level III hospital unit to Nyala and a 150-person Pakistani engineering company to Geneina are scheduled to deploy in late October or early November. Weiszegger said that UNAMID will relocate 336 Rwandans to the Supercamp in Nyala in order for the Um Kadada camp to accommodate the full Egyptian battalion. Weiszegger stated that the Egyptians "have been a bit difficult" by insisting on deploying to areas that have been completely prepared. Weiszegger said that he expects three FPUs to arrive in October. An Indonesian FPU arrived this week and will be staying in the El-Fasher supercamp on a transitional basis.

SELF DEPLOYMENT

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¶16. (SBU) UNAMID sources uniformly acknowledged the value of the concept of self-deployment, specifically noting Egyptian transportation of their own vehicles from El Obeid. Almstrom was not sure if r UN headquarters in New York had agreed to allow

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self-deployment for all units, as DPKO had granted a special exception for this Egyptian deployment. Weiszegger said that self-deployment has been very successful and "we will pursue this concept with other TCCs." On October 7, the UN-AU-and GOS agreed to explore further self deployment for the second battalions of both the Egyptians and Ethiopians, not only within Sudan, but all the way from Egypt and Ethiopia, stated Weiszegger. DFC Karenzi stated that self-deployment has succeeded, but was not optimistic that it would be a panacea: "how many other TCC's can actually deploy?" he asked.

LIGHT DEPLOYMENT

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¶17. (SBU) UNAMID contacts differed as to whether light deployment is a viable option. Almstrom noted that UNAMID military leadership has an ambivalent position on this, while DJSR Medili has been pushing the concept. Stafford stated that the light deployment plan will not happen as he had formulated the concept based on the goal of reaching 80% deployment by the end of the year. Now that the goal has been deemed unrealistic, there is no longer the need to endanger troops by bringing them in without necessary equipment, noted Stafford. DFC Karenzi, however, said the concept of light deployment is still being employed, as "all battalions are rotating in at full strength, and they are not bringing more equipment in with them, so they are essentially light deploying."

AIRPORT UPGRADES

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¶18. (SBU) Although the GoS gave UNAMID permission to upgrade Darfur's three major airports at UNAMID's expense, little progress has been made on necessary upgrades. Almstrom said that the airport runway in Geneina will require two layers, one of which will be crushed gravel. If UNAMID only uses equipment available on the local market in El Geneina for crushing gravel, it would take more than two years to make enough gravel for the runway. Almstrom punned that he was "crushed" by this revelation, and that UNAMID now needs to bring in a big Middle Eastern construction company with this capacity. The runway in Geneina is 1890 meters and according to Stafford, the biggest aircraft it should be able to handle is a C130, but it might also be able to handle a C17. Weiszegger downplayed the significance of these runway problems saying, "this will not have a major impact on deployment until the end of next

year." Significant upgrades to Darfur's other airports have not begun, noted other contacts.

COE

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¶9. (SBU) Stafford said that the transportation of contingent-owned equipment (COE) will increase now that the rainy season has ended. According to Weiszegger, transportation of COE is happening, "but not as fast as we would like." UNAMID has had to look at creative ways to deliver critical items such as communications equipment, stated Weiszegger, by breaking into some containers in El-Obeid, removing the necessary equipment, and delivering it by helicopter. Weiszegger noted that contracts with local companies were slightly delayed when "we had a small budget realignment." DFC Karenzi labeled the transportation of COE as "a nightmare," but emphasized that any support for an air bridge would be greatly appreciated. "Moving the COE by land is very difficult - we plan for three days and with bad weather it ends up taking a week," noted the Deputy Force Commander.

NEED FOR AIR ASSETS

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¶10. (SBU) All UNAMID leaders noted their appreciation for potential U.S. assistance with air transportation. Transportation has been hampered by a serious lack of air assets. Weiszegger emphasized that the IL-76 shared with UNMIS has been out-of-service for the last three weeks, and no containers have been moving to Geneina during that time. Weiszegger also stated that UNAMID would like to secure a C130, but "there is not even one C130 on the market at this point." Weiszegger stated that UNAMID has explored the possibility of borrowing one or more of MONUCS air assets, and he is hopeful that a deal can be worked out. According to Stafford, UNAMID especially needs Illyushin-76s and C17s to help with the crucial transportation of COE. Almstrom stated that U.S. support for securing helicopters is very important as well, especially for the purpose of medevacs. UNAMID senior staff discussed the potential Ukrainian helicopter contribution to UNAMID on October 14, noted DFC Karenzi, and some staff members expressed the concern that Darfur rebels may target the helicopters, as the GoS also uses Ukrainian pilots for some of their aircrafts. Poloff replied that some rebels will use any opportunity to criticize UNAMID, and that these concerns are likely overblown.

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FOCUS ON UNAMID'S OWN SECURITY

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¶11. (SBU) Last week the UN's Department of Field Support and the Department of Safety and Security made a joint visit to UNAMID in Darfur. Almstrom concluded that "we are in a bad shape" in terms of security. The Chief of Staff noted that some elements of his work, such as strategic planning, have had to take a lesser priority to important contingency and emergency action planning. According to Stafford, UN Agencies (UNICEF, UNAMID, etc.) are in a better situation than UNAMID's civilian employees. Almstrom stated that he is concerned about "free lancing" rebel movements and elements within the GoS that will use an ICC indictment against President Bashir to stage attacks against UNAMID. To date, attacks on UNAMID have all been committed by bandits, splinter groups of rebel factions, or rogue elements of the GoS according to Almstrom. UNAMID security planning and preparation will be complete by the end of December, "just in time for a possible ICC indictment," said Almstrom. Almstrom has completely mapped the location of "every single person in UNAMID," and has designated threat levels for geographic areas (the highest threat of which is on the western border and the area surrounding Shangil Tobaya.)

¶12. (SBU) Stafford emphasized that the perimeter security of many of UNAMID's bases is in dire condition. In some of the camps, hesco barriers have been put in place, but not filled with any dirt or sand, leaving an empty shell that could easily be bypassed. Stafford displayed one photograph of a UNAMID camp where the external barrier had intermittent hesco barriers connected by a thin line of barbwire (roughly equivalent to pasture fence.) Stafford noted that many troops have a different work ethic "than what we are used to in the west, as some of the troops just wait for the heavy

equipment needed to haul dirt and sand, when they could do it themselves and get some exercise while they are at it." Stafford noted that he may encourage employing local labor for reinforcing camp perimeters.

NEED FOR BETTER VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND SPARE PARTS

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¶ 113. (SBU) Almstrom stated that he was "shocked" by the state of some of the units that he visited, in particular one in Murnei where sixteen of the unit's twenty vehicles were inoperable. (Likewise, Stafford showed a photo of a line of trucks with all of their wheels up on blocks from the Mornei camp.) Colonel Stafford repeated Almstrom's concern, stating that only 25% of all of UNAMID's vehicles were operable in the area surveyed. Most of the vehicles' radios were likewise inoperable. This dire lack of vehicles and communications equipment has led to smaller and shorter patrols and UNAMID has not been able to deploy quick reaction forces to needed areas. UNAMID just purchased 200 tires and 100 batteries from the local market in El-Fasher to address this need for spare parts. Stafford stated that UNAMID is also attempting to identify the containers with these necessary spare parts sitting in El-Obeid and make this shipment a higher priority.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

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¶ 114. (SBU) According to Almstrom, construction on UNAMID's supercamps is proceeding well. Some areas of the supercamp in El-Fasher are almost useable. In particular, UNAMID's three supercamps have progressed well since customs clearance procedures have improved and material finally reached Nyala, Geneina, and El-Fasher. UNAMID may set up temporary offices within the supercamp space. The supercamps will also serve as a transition area for approximately 1200 troops. The supercamps in Nyala and Geneina are also making significant progress. Following PAE's departure, UNAMID will seek additional contracts relying on local and regional contractors led by UNOPS to expand and upgrade UNAMID camps. UNOPS has also agreed to take over project management and implementation for the construction of 83 community policing centers.

GOS COOPERATION

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¶ 115. (SBU) Weiszegger stated that the October 7 tripartite meeting with the AU, UN, and GoS was productive. It concluded with the GoS pledging to permit regular flights from 7 am to 7 pm (as opposed to the previous 8 am to 6 pm schedule with exceptions made only for emergencies.) The GoS has also improved flight clearance procedures (i.e. clearance for particular flights is granted for one week,) allowed gradual 24/7 airport access ("which is largely irrelevant until we can upgrade the airports,") and pledged additional convoy protection (although the GoS will need 48-hour advance notification, a minimum of 30 vehicles, and UNAMID support for the convoy's fuel, food, and water.) UNAMID also agreed in the tripartite meeting, said Weiszegger, to explore rehabilitating railroads to Darfur. The GOS will establish a liaison office in El-Fasher headed by a major

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general.

¶ 116. (SBU) Almstrom stated that obtaining visas for Canadian, American, Danish, Australian, and British citizens remains one major area in which the GoS has not been cooperative. UNAMID does, however, continue to learn new techniques for securing visas. One visa for an American Chief of Communications ("a critical position") was secured through applying in Uganda ("where the Sudanese Ambassador was exceptionally helpful.") Weiszegger noted that although agreement to many outstanding issues has been reached, "there is always the problem of making sure that these high-level decisions filter down to the lower levels in the government."

"PRESSURE ON UNAMID IS GOOD"

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¶ 117. (SBU) DFC Karenzi ended the October 15 meeting stating that he appreciates pressure from UN member states on UNAMID and the UN. "We need people pushing us and the GoS in El-Fasher, New York, and Khartoum - without this we would not be close to reaching our deployment goals for the end of the year and March 2009," stated

Karenzi. Karenzi ended the meeting by emphasizing that he appreciates all of the U.S.'s support for UNAMID.

COMMENT

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¶18. (SBU) Visits of senior UN officials, leaders of the Qatari Peace Initiative, and UN security teams have kept UNAMID's headquarters in El-Fasher very busy during October. Despite this added work and the challenges posed by a potential ICC indictment, UNAMID officials appeared optimistic about progress in deployment. News about the El-Geneina airport is perhaps the most disheartening development to come out of this visit, as UNAMID's previous deployment plans (such as the one presented to SE Williamson in El-Fasher in August) relied heavily on the capacity of this facility. Nonetheless, UNAMID appears to be poised for much forward progress on deployment in the last quarter of 2008 and into 2009.

ASQUINO